

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as indicated below:

- [c1] (previously presented): A method of removing particulate solids from an oil based drilling or completion fluid, wherein the fluid comprises a water-in-oil emulsion, the method comprising:
- exposing the fluid to an electric field having a strength lower than that required to coalesce the water droplets of the emulsion to electrically migrate particulate solids suspended therein, and
- collecting the migrated particulate solids to remove them from the fluid.
- [c2] (cancelled)
- [c3] (previously presented): A method according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the electric field has a strength less than 100,000 V/m.
- [c4] (previously presented): A method according to claim 3 any one of the previous claims, wherein the strength of the electric field is controlled such that current and voltage remain proportional to each other.
- [c5] (currently amended): A method according to claim 4 any one of the previous claims, wherein the fluid has a plastic viscosity (PV) PV and a yield point (YP) YP, and wherein the plastic viscosity (PV)PV and/or the yield point (YP)YP of the fluid are reduced as a result of the collection of the particulate solids.
- [c6] (previously presented): A method according to claim 1 any one of the previous claims, wherein the fluid contains suspended particulate solids include clay particles.
- [c7] (previously presented): A method according to claim 1 any one of the previous claims, wherein the fluid contains suspended particulate solids include weighting agent particles.
- [c8] (previously presented): A method according to claim 1 any one of the previous claims, wherein the particulate solids in the fluid exposed to the electric field occupy at least 5 vol. % of the total fluid.

- [c9] (previously presented): A method according to claim 8 any one of the previous claims, wherein the fluid exposed to the electric field is a shear-thinning fluid which forms a gel when quiescent.
- [c10] (previously presented): A method according to claim 1 any one of the previous claims, further comprising:
heating the fluid to enhance the collection of particulate solids.
- [c11] (currently amended): A method of recycling an oil based drilling or completion fluid by performing the method of any one of the previous claims comprising:
exposing the fluid to an electric field having a strength lower than that required to coalesce the water droplets of the fluid to electrically migrate particulate solids suspended therein;
collecting the migrated particulate solids to remove them from the fluid; and
using a centrifuge or hydrocyclone to remove other particulate solids from the fluid.
- [c12] (cancelled)
- [c13] (original): A method according to claim 1, including the step of using at least two electrodes to generate the electric field.
- [c14] (original): A method according to claim 1, including the step of using at least two electrodes to generate the electric field and a deposit removal system co-located with the electrodes.
- [c15] (original): A method according to claim 14, wherein deposit removal system is operated continuously or as a batch process.
- [c16] (cancelled)
- [c17] (previously presented): A method according to claim 1, wherein the fluid exposed to the electric field is a shear-thinning fluid which forms a gel when quiescent.
- [c18] (previously presented): A method according to claim 11, further comprising:
heating the fluid to enhance the collection of particulate solids.
- [c19] (previously presented): A method according to claim 18, wherein the particulate solids in the fluid exposed to the electric field occupy at least 5 vol. % of the total fluid.

- [c20] (previously presented): A method according to claim 19, wherein the fluid exposed to the electric field is a shear-thinning fluid which forms a gel when quiescent.
- [c21] (previously presented): A method according to claim 19, wherein the strength of the electric field is less than 100,000 V/m.
- [c22] (previously presented): A method according to claim 21, wherein the strength of the electric field is controlled such that current and voltage remain proportional to each other.
- [c23] (currently amended): A method according to claim 22, wherein the fluid has a plastic viscosity (PV) ~~PV~~ and a yield point (YP) ~~YP~~, the plastic viscosity (PV) ~~PV~~ and/or the yield point (YP) ~~YP~~ being reduced as a result of the collection of the particulate solids.